



# LIFELINK

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## Celebrating Six Months of Small ACTs

March marks the six month anniversary of the **Every Sailor, Every Day** campaign's "1 Small ACT" message, which launched during Navy Suicide Prevention Month in September 2015. While serving as a call-to-action promoting simple ways to stay connected, encourage healthy stress navigation and build resilience 365 days a year, "1 Small ACT" has emerged as more than just a campaign message. Through a digital Photo Gallery housed on **Navy Operational Stress Control's Facebook page**, "1 Small ACT" has come to represent the many everyday ways Sailors, family members and civilians can lead by example and lean on each other throughout life's challenges. So far, more than 400 photos and videos have been submitted in support of the "1 Small ACT" message, ranging from commanding officers, chiefs messes, CSADD chapters, individual Sailors, family members and Navy's most senior leaders.

The gallery, which accepts submissions through August 2016, features a wide range of commitments to making a difference and supporting psychological health. Sailors from the forward deployed USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) submitted more than 200 photos to the gallery, mostly captured in the ship's hangar bay. Though the photos showcase Sailors' immense creativity in thinking of ways to support themselves and others, a few themes and commonalities emerged. Several Small ACTs featured the use of humor to help shipmates regain a positive outlook, commitments to help new shipmates feel welcomed and efforts to promote cohesion.

"Strong connections and support are protective factors during challenging times. It's inspiring to see Sailors of all ranks thinking about what they can do to broaden the conversation about suicide and build community," said Capt. Mike Fisher, Director, Navy Suicide Prevention Branch. The branch's annual Cross Disciplinary Case Reviews consistently find that the majority of Sailors who die by suicide experience a loss of belongingness (such as an inability to connect with shipmates),

feel like a burden on friends or family, or a perceive lack of purpose in the workplace or mission. Sailors undergoing a career transition (retirement, personal change of station, separation, etc.), relationship issues, and career or personal setbacks are at increased risk. "Ongoing engagement and active communication can open the door for early intervention and support," said Fisher. "Our goal with '1 Small ACT' is not to limit suicide prevention to a single day or month of the year, rather our goal is to be there for every Sailor, every day."

Sailors at the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) produced a video illustrating the power that "1 Small ACT" has had in their lives, and how they pledge to pay it forward. One Sailor discussed his experience as a new check in at his first duty station. Upon arriving, his wallet was stolen and he had no money for food. A little more than a day later, he received a card in the mail from one of his Sunday school teachers back home that contained \$25. "She did not know that I needed that money and just felt compelled to insert that money into the card...it showed me that there is compassion anywhere and there's always someone watching out for you."

It's never too late to get involved. Take a selfie with your Small ACT written on **this sign** and email it to **suicideprevention@navy.mil**, post it to your Facebook page using hashtag #1SmallACT or upload it to the **Real Warriors app**. Together we can be there for **Every Sailor, Every Day**.



## Lifelink Spotlight

### Command Fitness Leader Helps Sailors “See” Success

This month we spotlight Marketa Jones, a command fitness leader (CFL) at Training Support Center Great Lakes (TSC Great Lakes). Jones recently conducted a series of three classes to teach Sailors how visualization techniques can help them achieve success on their next physical readiness test (PRT) as well as all aspects of everyday life. Jones knows that fitness isn't merely the result of physical strength and endurance—it starts in the mind.

Visualization and mental imagery can complement any training routine—from preparing for the PRT, to preparing for advancement exams or even gearing up for your Monday. It can be thought of as a dress rehearsal or mental practice for an event or particular skill, where you use each of your senses to envision all steps leading to a successful outcome. Visualization can be practiced regularly, even when you're not in anticipation of a “big day.”

One **study** explored the effects of this mind tactic on gaining muscle power and found mental imagery not only led to actual physical gains, but also found that the practice enhanced cortical output signal, leading to higher muscle activation and increased strength. Additional studies on the brain have revealed positive impacts to motor control, attention, memory, and motivation, indicating the tangible value of visualization.

Jones hopes that Sailors will apply this mental power beyond seeking physical gains. “I hope they can identify at a point when something is happening to them, they can actually say ‘this is a motivation issue,’” Jones said in a related [Navy.mil story](#). “Then they will learn how to self-talk their way to better performance and not to let [adversity] overcome them.”

Want to learn more about visualization but aren't lucky enough to attend one of Jones' classes? Check out these resources on [HPRC](#) to help improve decision-making, reduce errors, increase confidence and, of course, reduce stress.

Bravo Zulu, Marketa Jones and TSC Great Lakes Sailors!



## Resilience Corner

### Savor the Flavor of Eating Right with Mindfulness

There are a variety of factors that influence our food choices, from childhood experiences to current hunger levels, the food around us, emotions and more. Our perceptions of “healthy” versus “unhealthy” food can be



shaped by as many factors, including confusing labels, clever marketing and fad diets. March is Navy Nutrition Month and this year's focus follows the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics National Nutrition Month campaign theme: **Savor the Flavor of Eating Right**. This theme encourages you to explore the different ways to follow a nutritious and balanced eating plan packed with tasty foods, while taking the time to enjoy and appreciate the many flavors and **social experiences** food adds to our lives.

Eating right and maintaining regular physical activity can be stressful in today's busy world. This year make mindfulness a priority at mealtime by focusing on:

- Enjoying the sight, sounds, and good memories associated with eating;
- Making half your plate fruits and vegetables;
- Trying one new food from each food group every week; and
- Having a basis of three meals daily and fixing healthy snacks (hold you over when there's more than 4-5 hours between meals).

A solid foundation within these concepts will help to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, reduce the risk of chronic disease, and promote overall physical and psychological health. You'll also be well on your way to building new nutrition habits that can help take the stress out of healthy eating. To savor the flavor of eating right, engage all your senses. Observe the shape and color of your food, savor the aroma, eat slowly and enjoy every bite. For more mindful eating tips, visit [navstress.wordpress.com](http://navstress.wordpress.com).

## Suicide Prevention Coordinators—Looking for Additional Materials?

The **Real Warriors Campaign**, official partner of Navy Suicide Prevention Branch's *Every Sailor, Every Day* campaign, has a variety of print materials available for download and free ordering. Materials include posters encouraging mission readiness and peer support, brochures outlining tools for active duty and reserve component Sailors and families, and more. Each printed material includes information for seeking confidential help. Check out Real Warriors' most recent **posters** as part of their “I Can, I Will” series today! For more downloads and free online ordering, visit [www.realwarriors.net/materials](http://www.realwarriors.net/materials).

## News and Resources

Commanding Officer's Suicide Prevention Program Handbook  
[Issuu](#)

Relationship Goals: Using the Principles of Resilience to Jumpstart Connections with Others  
[NavyNavStress](#)

Stress Continuum Model Infographic  
[OSC](#)

Post your Selfie for Brain Injury Awareness Month  
[Health.mil](#)

Video: Taking the First Step  
[Real Warriors](#)

4 Steps to Boost Your Behavioral Health this Year  
[Guard Your Health](#)

Eat Better and Move More  
[Health.mil](#)

Especially for Military Parents  
[HPRC](#)

Military Youth Can Use Tech to Improve Mental Health Literacy, Coping Skills  
[DCoE](#)

Eat Together to Live Better  
[NavyNavStress](#)

A Cautionary Tale  
[All Hands](#)

Heart Healthy Breathing Blows Stress Away  
[Health.mil](#)

Current and Upcoming Events  
**Navy Nutrition Month**  
March

**Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month,**  
**Alcohol Abuse Awareness Month**  
April

**SPC Training Webinars**  
March 10, 1800 CST  
March 23, 1000 CST  
[Register Here](#)

## Conversation with CNP and Fleet Beldo about Suicide Prevention

Recently, Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) Vice Adm. Bill Moran and Fleet Master Chief April Beldo had a conversation with MC2 L.J. Burleson about psychological health, suicide prevention and seeking help. These are topics that should be discussed openly—by every Sailor, every day—so that all are aware of the many ways to practice good self care and peer support. Below are highlights from this conversation, which can be viewed in its entirety on [NavyLive](#).



### **On discussing psychological health as openly and regularly as physical health:**

Vice Adm. Moran: "...Every time a report comes across our desk that talks about a Sailor who took their own life, it breaks our hearts. We really need to talk about this as a leadership team; we need to talk about it as members of our own teams, and the fleet. You know, there is no right time to talk about it; we got to talk about it all the time everyday."

### **On helping Sailors understand that no one is immune to stress and anyone can be at risk for suicide:**

Vice Adm. Moran: "Talking about our challenges whether they're operational challenges, maintenance challenges, social challenges or psychological challenges like this one, makes all of us better....The more we look out for each other, the more we're going to recognize when things aren't going right for Sailors, or something's out of the norm. Those are the indicators that hopefully people recognize and they step in. I think whether you step in and actually save a life, or just express an act of kindness, that will strengthen the team at the end of the day."

### **On recognizing the signs during our interactions with shipmates and family:**

Vice Adm. Moran: "...Every time we've learned of a suicide we often go back and look at what indicators we might have missed along the way. They're often very subtle, and sometimes very direct... There is no magic formula that we can train Sailors to recognize and immediately be able to ACT. It's just a general sense of having good situation awareness of your environment and your teammates that are around you. If you're someone who is having a tough day and is seeing some of those challenges, those stressors from home, the stressors from work, [don't] be afraid to talk to others about it. "

### **On seeking the right resources for stress navigation and suicide prevention:**

Fleet Beldo: "I think all of our Sailors have gotten the information with regards to *Every Sailor, Every Day*. There are chaplains out there that we can look to. The Fleet and Family Support Centers have different programs, and turning to each other. I might not have the right answer, but I can get you the information..."

Vice Adm. Moran: "The other thing I'd add is we have a great medical community as part of our Navy. They are well trained in many aspects of psychological, mental health issues. Again, because they're wearing a uniform, it might dissuade people from walking in the door. Don't be afraid to do that. Seek out that help and... don't be afraid or reluctant to refer them to our medical professionals. It's a great team, and they are part of the team when you look at the whole part of the Navy that's trying to tackle this."

Help is always available. Call 1-800-273-8255, text 838255 or visit [www.militarycrisisline.net](http://www.militarycrisisline.net).